

RECEIVED
FEDERAL ELECTION
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF GENERAL
COUNSEL

George C Taylor
SC Congressional Candidate District **JUN 19 3 50 PM '00**
1635 Old Airport Road
Winnsboro, SC 29180
803-635-7969

June 9, 2000

Dear General Council to the FEC:

I am writing because I am concerned that the guidelines for the inclusion into the South Carolina Congressional Televised Debates may become subjective rather than objective. Federal Election Law Title 11 sec. 110.13 titled "Candidate debates" requires that the criteria for inclusion into these debates be "pre-established objective criteria." The South Carolina League of Women Voters and South Carolina Education Television are beginning to plan these debates. They held similar debates in 1998 and I am including their 1998 criteria with this letter. The two criteria I am concerned about are the statewide media coverage and 15% share of the vote as determined by opinion polls.

If most newspapers are clearly biased in covering third party candidates then they will not be objective in their evaluation of a candidate's significance. The bias of most South Carolina newspapers can be seen by their exclusion of third party candidates when covering races in S.C.

Of even greater concern than using newspaper coverage as an indication of candidate significance is the use of opinion polls. Educated people know that there is a difference between fact and opinion, and the difference between them is that facts are objective and opinions are subjective. By their very nature opinion poles are measures of opinions, i.e., subjectivity and any thesaurus will list subjective as the antonym of objective. It does not matter how one measures subjectivity, what one is measuring will always be subjective. Therefore, opinion polls or subjectivity polls are not objective and they violate the law which says that "staging organizations must use pre-established objective criteria to determine which candidates may participate in a debate."

The criteria for the 2000 SC Congressional debates have not been finalized. I have talked to the President of the South Carolina League of Women Voters and told her my concern. She has not yet taken a stand on the issue which leaves open the possibility of the debates using the criteria to which I object. I have also tried to contact the appropriate personnel at South Carolina Education Television but they have not yet returned my call. Ideally, I would like to fully discuss my concerns with these debate staging organizations before I file a complaint, but I **choose to file my complaint now** because I know it takes the FEC a long time to investigate complaints and I want a response from the FEC before the debates and the elections are over. I would also like an immediate letter of confirmation that you have received this complaint.

Sincerely,

George C Taylor 6/12/00
George C. Taylor
SC Natural Law Party
Congressional Candidate for District 2

Diana K. [unclear]
6/12/00

My Commission Expires
March 14, 2005

5430-504-40-12

CANDIDATE PARTICIPATION CRITERIA FOR 1998 TELEVISED DEBATES

Candidates who meet **ALL** the following criteria are being asked to participate in the League of Women Voters of SC, SCETV and WIS TV statewide televised debates in 1998:

- 1) The candidate, if elected, must be legally qualified to hold office under federal or state law.
- 2) The candidate must be eligible to be on the Ballot.
- 3) The candidate must have evidence of a Campaign. The candidate must have made a public announcement of an intention to run; the candidate must have a Campaign headquarters and staff; the candidate must have publicly stated his or her views on the pertinent issues and have made campaign appearances around the state.
- 4) The candidate must be a significant candidate. The sponsoring organizations have used their "good faith judgment" in applying the following factors to determine "significance."
 - a. The candidate must be receiving statewide media coverage as a recognized candidate.
 - b. Status as a nominee of a particular party does not automatically make a candidate eligible for debate participation.
 - c. Statewide nonpartisan public opinion polls must show the candidate with at least a 15% share of the vote. For the November 3, 1998 General Election, the cut off for establishing this number will be September 15, 1998.